



**Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity**

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## **Director Schultz Calls for Job Creation Legislation**

*Urges structural reforms to address jobs leaving Illinois according to  
January jobs report*

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois Department of Commerce Director Jim Schultz issued the following statement on Illinois' unemployment rate increasing in January:

“With national unemployment below 5 percent, it is completely unacceptable that Illinois' unemployment rate rose in January to over 6 percent. While the rest of the country is working and growing, Illinois is being left behind. Many communities in our state are experiencing unemployment rates of 8 or even 9 percent. We must take action to jumpstart growth, and create jobs and economic opportunity for Illinois families.

Illinois represents some of the best this country has to offer, with an outstanding workforce, a transportation system that connects businesses to domestic and international markets, and a strong base of natural resources. Based solely on our assets, Illinois should be the most competitive state in the country and an engine for economic growth. Despite these advantages, Illinois lags in job creation, ranking 29th out of 50 states.

We cannot continue failed policies that have stymied economic growth in Illinois for years, driving businesses, jobs and residents to friendlier states. We need structural reforms to address the high cost of doing business in Illinois.

Traditional Illinois industries such as manufacturing are being driven out of the state, and taking thousands of jobs with them, due to out of control workers compensation costs and the second highest property taxes in the nation. We must make Illinois more competitive in order to reverse the flow of jobs out of our state and encourage growth and investment in Illinois.

We must take a new approach to economic development in Illinois and adapt to the 21st century needs of businesses. In addition to Governor Rauner's proposed structural reforms, Illinois will benefit from the recently created Illinois Business and Economic Development Corporation, which will assist the Department of Commerce in marketing our many assets in order to encourage job creation and investment in Illinois. We look forward to collaborating with the Corporation to advance economic development and growth in Illinois. ”

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